DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 433 436 CE 079 112

AUTHOR	Benett, Yves
TITLE	The Skills Training Centres in The Gambia.
SPONS AGENCY	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, Paris (France).
PUB DATE	1998-05-00
NOTE	73p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Research (143)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Adult Education; Curriculum Development; Entrepreneurship; Foreign Countries; *Job Training; Learning Laboratories; Postsecondary Education; Program Effectiveness; Program Evaluation; Program Improvement; *School Holding Power; Skill Development; *Staff Development; *Vocational Education; Work Experience Programs
IDENTIFIERS	*Gambia

ABSTRACT

A study surveyed 44 skills centers in The Gambia through a questionnaire, evaluated them regarding vocational training, and conducted on-site research of 17 targeted centers. Findings were as follows: most operated as private organizations; the retention rate was an average of 84%; centers operated with an average student/staff ratio of about 12:1 during the academic year 1996-97; targeted centers operated with 125 academic staff, most full time; 65 percent of principals felt the most important aim of staff development was to update knowledge and practical skills of staff in their subject areas; most buildings were located in reasonably good areas; teaching-learning materials were in short supply; adequate library facilities were available in 4 of 17 centers; governance of the targeted centers was through boards of directors of parent bodies or through their own governing bodies; and centers were making vigorous efforts to recover costs. Supervised work experience was mandatory in technical subjects and most secretarial studies programs. About 58 percent of centers indicated employers' involvement in curriculum development, and about 70 percent claimed to provide information to employers. Only 42 percent of program leaders gave advice and support in job search. Self-employment was actively encouraged. Recommendations included curriculum review and innovation, promotion of good practice in center management, and funding of new initiatives to increase training volume and quality. (Appendixes contain 10 references and analyses of physical resources for various subject areas.) (YLB)

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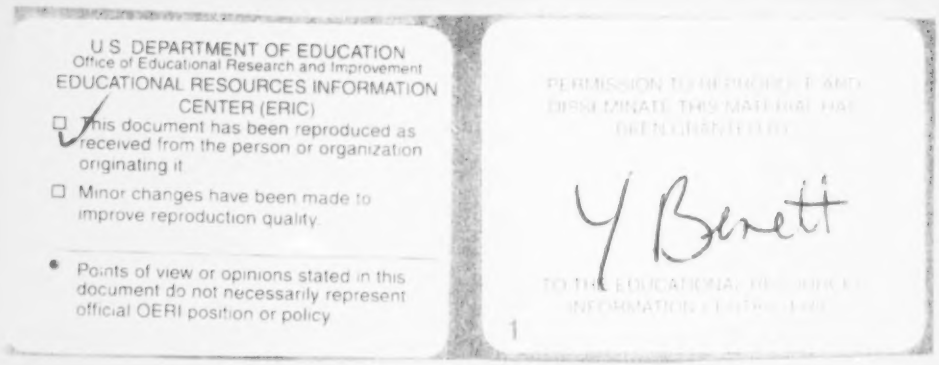
The Skills Training Centres in The Gambia

by

Yves Benett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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

This report is based on a two-months, UNESCO funded study of the Skills Centres in The Gambia. An aim of the study was to identify objectives for the further establishment/ strengthening of Skills Centres.

The methods used were:

(a) a survey of all 44 existing Skills Centres of category C1, through a self-completion questionnaire to the Principal of each Centre.

(b) a close, on-site, study of 17 "registered" Centres among the existing Skills Centres.

(c) a national consultation workshop.

The Findings

In general, there were areas of strength and areas of weakness, notably the following:

Areas of strength

The availability of sponsorships for female trainees, the previous teaching experience of the trainers, the average Pass Rate, the average Student/Staff Ratio, the strategies for encouraging self-employment in the rural areas, the Programme Leaders' formal evaluation of their programmes.

Areas of weakness

The average Retention Rate, the trainers' academic qualifications and previous work experience, the technical support for the trainers, the physical conditions of the Centres, the financial resources available, the opportunities for work experience for the trainees, the graduates' destinations, the lack of interest in the NCTEVT's National Standards certificate, the lack of representation of local employers on governing bodies and on the development of training programmes, the non-participatory form of management.

Recommendations

A number of recommendations have been made, in some detail, to meet the following identified objectives:

OBJECTIVE I (***for policy implementation***):

- to develop clear definitions of the increasing responsibilities of the DTEVT in connection with the implementation of the Revised Education Policy 1988-2003 (DoSE, 1997) with regard to vocational training at the C1 Skills Centres.

OBJECTIVE II (***for curriculum review and innovation***):

- to review the structure and content of the training programmes offered at present at the Centres and develop new, innovative programmes.

OBJECTIVE III (***for institutional management***):

- to promote good practice in the management of the Centres.

OBJECTIVE IV (***for resource allocation***):

- to fund new initiatives for increasing the volume of training provided at the Centres and improving the quality of the training programmes.

ACRONYMS

CGLI	City & Guilds of London Institute
DoSE	Department of State for Education
DOSTIE	Department of State for Trade, Industry and Employment
DTEVT	Directorate of Technical Education and Vocational Training
GG	Government of The Gambia
GPTC	Gambia Public Transport Corporation
IBAS	Indigenous Business Advisory Service
NAWEC	National Water and Electricity Corporation
NCTEVT	National Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NTS	National Training Standard
PMO	Personnel Management Office
WAEC	West African Examination Council

Acknowledgements

I am most grateful to UNESCO and to the Department of State for Education (DoSE) in The Gambia, for the opportunity to undertake this study. I am particularly grateful to Mr Jan de BOSCH KEMPER of UNESCO and to Mr Lawrence Bruce, of the Project Implementation Unit, DoSE, for putting the necessary resources at my disposal.

Given the complexity and scope of this project and the limited time allocated to it, I could not have completed it without the Project Team; the good team spirit that prevailed throughout the duration of the project was most encouraging. I am therefore greatly indebted to my colleagues in the Project team, namely, Mr Ebrahim Dondeh (the Project Co-ordinator), Mr Ousman Nyang (the Project Manager), Mr Abdoulie Loum (the Project Officer), Mrs Ida Jahumpa-N'Jie, (researcher), Mrs Mary Allen (researcher), and Miss Mariama Jallow (the Project Secretary). Mr Al-Harun, a UNDP Volunteer joined the Project team for the on-site study of the Centres and I appreciate very much his valuable contribution to the project.

Importantly too, it would have been impossible to undertake such a project without the co-operation and warm reception of the Principals and Programme Leaders of the Skills Centres surveyed, the goodwill of the officials, employers, trainees and parents interviewed, and the advice of the participants at the National Consultation Workshop. I would like to record my sincere thanks to all of them for contributing their own experiences and insights.

Finally, I would like to extend my thanks to my wife, Evelyn, for taking on the key role of Personal Secretary to me during the final stages in the production of this report.

Dr. Yves Benett
Education Consultant
May 1998

The Skills Training Centres in The Gambia

SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION

This two-months, UNESCO - funded project had as its terms of reference the following:

(a) To conduct a survey of the existing Skills Centres in terms of:
   (i) the available equipment and facilities
   (ii) the enrolment of staff and students
   (iii) the curricula and learning programmes offered
   (iv) the operational modalities, cost and cost recovery.

(b) To undertake an evaluation of the Skills Centres, as regards Vocational Training, which includes:
   (i) the articulation between the existing Skills Centres and the workplace (including the placement of students during and after the completion of the courses offered)
   (ii) a quality assessment.

(c) To identify and prioritise objectives for the further establishment/ strengthening of Skills Centres and propose concrete strategies to attain these objectives

1.1 Statement of the problem

The present Government policy for post Basic Education (Grades 1 to 9) is to ensure that 50% of the Basic Education graduates progress to the Senior Secondary Schools and 25% to the vocational skills centres, whilst 25% enter the world of work (DoSE, 1997). The key issue centres, therefore, on how best to achieve this policy objective in the changing economic context (in so far as Skills Centres are concerned), particularly in the rural areas, where the problem of the migration of young people (in search of employment in the urban informal sector) is well known. The issue raises questions about the efficiency and effectiveness of the existing Skills Centres and generally about whether there is the institutional capacity to supply training for the low-level labour force.

1.2 The Skills Training Centres

As Table 1 shows, five categories of vocational training and of Centres for such training had been identified by the DTEVT (1994; 1995) on the basis of certain criteria; however, the name which a Centre took did not necessarily indicate its category as a centre for vocational training. Indeed, the categorisation of Centres was problematic as any one Centre could be delivering more than one category of training.

Table: 1

The categorisation of vocational training and of Centres for such training

[Note: (i) the present study focused on the *Skills Training Centres* in category C1
(ii) the criteria on which the categorisation of training is based are in italics.]

The categories of vocational training and of Centres for such training				
Informal Training Centre(s) (CO)	**Skills Training Centres (C1)**	**Vocational Training Centres (VTC) (C2)**	**Technical Institutes (C3)**	**In-Plant Training Centres (C4)**
The duration of the training Programmes				
9 to 12 months (full-time)	**Not less than 12 months (full-time)**	Not less than 2 years (full-time or equivalent part-time)	Not less than 2 to 3 yrs (full-time or equivalent part-time)	Tailor-made courses of varying length (full-time)
The educational background of the trainees				
No entry requirement(s)	**Primary school leavers or drop-outs; Middle school leavers or drop-outs; Centres' own entrance examinations**	Primary school leavers. Middle school leavers. High school drop outs. Apprentices. Skills Centres graduates	Middle School leavers. High School leavers. Apprentices. VTC graduates	Workers who want / need additional knowledge in their specialist subject areas
The employment status of most trainees				
Self-employed	**Not in employment**	Not in employment	Both employed and unemployed	Employed or self- employed
The terminal Qualification(s)				
No qualification	**(a) Each Centre's own Certificate (b) National Training Standards Certificate (c) External basic Certificates (e.g. CGLI Part 1 Craft Certificate)**	External Certificates (e.g. CGLI Certificates. Pitman Certificates)	External Certificates (e.g. CGLI Certificates . Pitman Certificates)	Certificates for the different subject areas covered during training

The present project focused on the Skills Training Centres (or Skills Centres, in short) in category C1. There were 44 of these Centres: 32 which were registered with the DTEVT and 12 which had applied for registration but their applications were still being considered by the DTEVT. The registration of a Vocational Training Centre entails:

(a) providing the necessary information that DTEVT requests (see APPENDIX I),

(b) being inspected by a DTEVT team.

Centres were founded in very different circumstances and in very different ways. The *Sajuka Training Centre* at Barra, a private Centre, is an example of how a local community planned the establishment of its Skills Centre. The Centre was founded following :

(a) a local survey in 1994 which identified, amongst other things, the educational needs of young people (specially of girls who had either left school early before completing their formal education or had not acquired skills which would enable them "to earn a decent living")

(b) two workshops at which a time-table for the establishment of the Centre was drawn and to which various groups (such as villagers, school leavers and potential teachers) and organisations (such as IBAS) participated.

Subsequently, funds were mobilised from various organisations, such as GAMTEL, GPTC, and the Kingfisher Trust, and the Centre was set up.

An example of a very different kind of origin for a Centre was that of the *Little Trees Skills Training Centre* at the Scouts camp site in Bakoteh. The Gambia Scouts Project (which was a project launched by the British Scouts and the Gambia Scouts jointly in 1987) conducted "a careful study" of the need to establish a skills training centre at the scouts camp site in Bakoteh, and in 1993 took "all the responsibility of building and operating" a skills training Centre at the camp site. Then, in August 1995, the first phase of the construction of the Centre started with the building of two lecture rooms, two multi-purpose workshops and four stores.

It was also important in the present project to put in context the growth in the number of registered C1 Skills Centres (from 15 in 1994 to 32 at present). For, from a historical perspective, on the one hand, there has been a "massive privatisation campaign in the past few years" and "Government's recognition of the private sector as a serious partner in national development" (G.G,1996). On the other hand, prior to

the establishment of the New Education Policy (1988 - 2003), training centres were operating freely "without linking their activities to a pre-determined level of training/ qualification". The majority of training centres were issuing local certificates to students without any set standards. (DTEVT,1994). This " laissez-faire type of training and certification" had " led to suspicion by employers that both quality and relevance of training were being neglected". To " ameliorate these anomalies", the National Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training (NCTEVT) which was established in 1992 by an Act of Parliament had appointed a sub-committee to look at the activities of the training centres; and in that same year that sub-committee produced a report in which it categorised these Centres on the basis of a number of criteria to be applied for assessing the level of training undertaken in any particular Centre. These criteria included the four shown in Table 1 together with the following:

- The Courses were to be based on the National Training Standards of the NCTEVT or its equivalent.
- The qualifications required for the teaching staff were an Intermediate Craft Certificate, together with industrial experience and the Further Education Teachers' Certificate or its equivalent.
- The graduates had to be certified by the National Council or any other certifying body approved by the Council.
- The training facilities had to be adequate for Basic Craft training.

(DTEVT, 1994).

However, the registration of the new training centres remained a point of weakness; for, according to the DTEVT's (1994) report of training activities over the period 1992 to 1994, quite a lot of training centres were in operation without seeking prior approval from the National Council for Technical Education and Vocational Training.

Section 2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 *Introduction*

Because of the time constraint on this project, both the intended survey and the evaluation of the Skills Centres could only be of limited scope; yet the validity of the methods and procedures used as well as the reliability of the data had to be ensured. For these reasons, a multi - method approach was used consisting of the following:

(a) a survey of all 44 Skills Training Centres of C1 category through a self-completion questionnaire (to the Principal of each Centre) which focused on the Centre's

(i) Training Programmes

(ii) Staffing

(iii) Curriculum

(iv) Management

(b) a close, on-site study of a 50% sample of the "registered" Centres (n=32) through the following, and focusing in one or more of three subject areas (Commercial, Home Economics, Technical), as appropriate, in each Centre:

(i) individual interviews of:

- the Principal
- one Programme Leader/Head of Department, per subject area
- one trainee / one parent

Local employers and local officials were also interviewed individually whenever possible

(ii) a self-completion questionnaire for one Programme Leader, per subject area

(iii) an account, for each subject area, of the available physical resources:

- the tools
- the equipment
- the facilities (library and computing)

(iv) observations of teaching-learning for each subject area in the following (as appropriate):

- one classroom
- one workshop
- one laboratory
- one office

(c) a one-day, national consultation workshop during which proposals were presented (through questions and group discussions) for the further establishment/strengthening of Skills Centres

All the activities in (a) to (c) above were planned and undertaken by the Project Team. The team was made up of the following:

(a) Ebrahim Dondeh (as Project Co-ordinator)
(b) Ousman NYang (as Project Manager and Technical Subjects Specialist)
(c) Abdoulie Loum (as Project Officer and Technical Subjects Specialist)
(d) Ida Jahumpa-N'Jie (as researcher and Commercial Subjects specialist)
(e) Mary Allen (as researcher and Home Economics Specialist)
(f) Mariama Jallow (as Project Secretary)
(g) Yves Benett (as Project Consultant)

A UNDP volunteer (Al-Harun) joined the Project team for the on-site study.

2.2 The sample of Skills Centres

In order to obtain an appropriate sample for the second prong of the approach (that is, the close, on-site study), the "registered" centres were classified by:

(a) geographical area (rural/urban)
(b) the number of subject areas offered (three / two / one)

The distribution of registered C1 Skills Centres by this two-way classification (see Table 2) showed that the concentration of Centres was in the Kombo St Mary Division (for the Urban areas) and in the Western Division (for the rural areas); this sampling frame also highlighted the fact that:

(a) there was no provision in Banjul for category C1 training in technical subjects.

(b) the growth in the provision of category C1 training was largely in traditionally women's fields of study, namely, Commercial subject areas and Home Economics.

Table 2:

The number of registered Skills Centres

by administrative area and number of subject areas offered

Administrative Area	Subject Areas								
	3 subject areas	2 subject areas			1 subject area				Grand totals
	C&H&T	C&H	C&T	H&T	C	H	T	Totals	
Rural Areas									
Western Division	1	1	1	1	2	-	1	7	
Lower River Division	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	
North Bank Division	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	3	13
Central River Division	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Upper River Division	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	
Urban Areas									
Kombo St. Mary Division	3	5	1	-	5	1	-	15	19
Banjul	-	1	-	-	2	1	-	4	
Totals	6	7	2	3	10	2	2		
Grand Total	6	12			14				32

[Key: C = The Commercial Subject areas (including Computing);
H = Home Economics (including Food and Fashion);
T = The Technical subject areas (Engineering, Construction and Agriculture)]

The 50% sample was achieved by aggregating the data as shown in Table 3 and subsequently sampling at random approximately half the number of centres in each of the cells in Table 3 to make up the 16 targeted Centres. However, the one and only Centre in the Upper River Division was not selected by this method and consequently it was decided to include it in the final sample (to reflect the distribution of Centres across the country) thus increasing the sample size to 17. Furthermore, the opportunity was taken during the fieldwork up-country (for the "close on-site study") to visit the following Centres and interview briefly their Senior Managers:

(a) the *Agricultural Vocational Training Centre* at Chamen

(b) the *Action Aid Skills Training Centre* at Sapu.

Table 3:
The number of registered Skills Centres
by **socio-economic area and number of subject areas offered.**

Subject Areas	Rural Area	Urban Area	Total
Three subject areas (C & H & T)	3	3	6
Two subject areas (CH or CT or HT)	5	7	12
One subject area (C or H or T)	5	9	14
Total	13	19	32

[Key: C = Commercial subject areas (including Computing)
H = Home Economics (including Food and Fashion)
T = Technical subject areas (Engineering, Construction, Agriculture)]

Table 4 shows in summary form the total number of Centres in the study. The distribution of registered Skills Centres targeted for close study is shown in Table 5 and in Appendix II. The number of training programmes studied for each subject area was as follows:

- for the Commercial subject area: 12
- for the Home Economics subject area: 9
- for the Technical subject area: 10

The total number of targeted training programmes was thus 31.

Table 4:
The total number of Skills Training centres
(for category C1 training) studied *by* **registration status.**

	Registered Centres		Non-registered Centres (but registration under consideration)
	Targeted for close study	Not targeted for close study	
	17	15	12
Total	32		12
Grand Total	44		

[Note: see APPENDIX II for the list of targeted registered Centres]

Table 5:

The distribution of registered Skills Centres targeted for close study *by* administrative area and number of subject areas offered

Administrative Areas	Number of subject areas offered							Totals	Grand Total
	3 subject areas	2 subject areas			1 subject area				
	C&H&T	C&H	C&T	H&T	C	H	T		
Rural Areas									
Western Division	1	-	1	1	-	-	1	4	
Lower River Division	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	
North Bank Division	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	8
Central River Division	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Upper River Division	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	
Urban Areas									
Kombo St Mary Division	2	1	1	-	1	-	-	5	9
Banjul	-	1	-	-	2	1	-	4	
TOTALS	4	2	2	2	4	1	2		
GRAND TOTAL	4	6			7				17

[Key: C = The Commercial subject areas (including Computing);
H = Home Economics (including Food and Fashion);
T = The Technical subject areas (Engineering, Construction and Agriculture)]

2.3 Data analyses

A range of methods was used for analysing the data and the analyses were as follows:

(a) for each item in the self-completion questionnaire for the Principals:

(i) an analysis of the distribution of all the Principals' responses for that item, and, where applicable, the average response.

(ii) an analysis of the relationship between the Principals' responses for that item and each of the following:

- the geographical locations of the Centres (that is, rural/urban)
- the types of organisations that the Centres were (that is government/ parastatal/ grant-aided/ NGO/ Private)
- the subject areas offered

(that is, Commercial/Home Economics/Technical).

(b) for each item in the self-completion questionnaire for the Programme Leaders:

(i) an analysis of the distribution of the Programme Leaders' responses for that item

(ii) an analysis of the relationship between the Programme Leaders' responses and the Principals' responses for the same item (in the Principals' questionnaire)

(c) a content analysis of all the interview data

(d) an analysis of "unit costs" (in terms of teaching hours) for the training programmes

(e) an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the Centres as a whole.

SECTION 3. THE FINDINGS

3.1 HOW DID THE C1 SKILLS CENTRES OPERATE?

As Table 6 shows, most of the 44 Centres operated as private organisations; some received contributions (financial or in kind) from "friends" abroad, or from local organisations such as the Women's Bureau, which might purchase equipment such as sewing machines for them. Other private Centres were owned by voluntary bodies like the Gambia Scouts Association. Others still were part of larger organisations or projects which encompassed "Production Units" and/or "Servicing Units", as well as Training Units; examples of these were;

(a) *the Quantum Associates Computer Training Centre* (in Banjul) which is a constituent part of the Quantum Associates Company.

(b) the *Tanji Skills Centre* which was a joint initiative of the local Community Development Project and "Africa Now".

Table 6:

The Skills Centres
by **types of organisations and registration status**

	Government Organisations		Parastatal Organisations		Grant-Aided Organisations		NGOs		Private Organisations	
	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban
Registered	2	-	-	1	-	1	2	2	9	15
Not Registered	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	7

The Centres that were NGOs were sponsored by organisations overseas, one example being the *Canaan Technical Institute* which operates under the aegis of the West Africa Mission Board which has its Head Office in Seoul, South Korea.

Another case in point was the *Boka Loho Skills Training & Multipurpose Centre* which was sponsored by the Swedish International Development Agency; the original idea behind such a centre having been formulated by a group of Gambian residents in Sweden who "joined hands" to promote the development of **"BOKA LOHO"** (that is, **"TOGETHER WE CAN"**) in the Gambia. Interestingly too, the *Njawara Agricultural*

Training Centre had obtained NGO status after having started as a private organisation; the point was that funding agencies, such as the Catholic Relief Services, would only sponsor individual micro-projects (such as the Ram Fattening project) if the Centre became a non-profit organisation.

There was evidence (albeit limited) of well-planned, well-maintained, purpose-built Centres with large, well ventilated and well-illuminated classrooms, workshops, and computer laboratories in the Centres which were sponsored either by Government or by NGOs. These Centres were in sharp contrast to the dark, dingy, derelict, buildings which housed some Centres even in the Kombo St Mary Division and in Banjul, where attractive, spacious, well furnished Administration blocks could be deceptive for they could mask the fact that the physical conditions of the classrooms and of the workshops, and the ill-equipped facilities were not suitable for teaching and learning.

3.1.1 The training programmes

Eleven (65%) of the targeted Centres (n = 17) offered only full-time, one or two-year programmes of study to Basic Education graduates and/or early school leavers (except in Carpentry and Secretarial Studies where the programmes could be of three years duration for some trainees). As indicated in Table 5 the programmes were mostly in Commercial subjects, Home Economics and Technical subjects.

Two Centres offered programmes on a part-time basis varying in duration (from 1 to 6 months). One of these Centres offered programmes in Computing; it was the *Gambia Computer Training Centre*, in Banjul. The other Centre was the *Njawara Agricultural Training Centre*. It offered programmes on topics such as Orchard Management.

Four of the Centres offered both part-time programmes and full-time programmes and, among these, two Centres which stood out, were the *YMCA Vocational Training Centre* at Kanifing (which ran short courses for the PMO aimed at upgrading the Computing skills of secretaries in the Civil Service) and the *Julangel Skills Training Centre* at Fuladu (which ran short courses for the local community in Agriculture, Home Economics and Motor Mechanics).

The programmes surveyed were typical of vocational training programmes in that occupational preparation was central in them, in the sense that all the programme time was devoted to preparing trainees to become skilled workers in the occupations of their choice (probably to the detriment of further, general education).

The interviews of the selected Programme Leaders in the targeted Centres revealed that eleven (35%) of the 31 targeted training programmes were modular. However, there was no evidence of these modular programmes being flexible enough to accommodate potential clients, such as women who wished to return to education and training (and wanted to enrol at different times during the calendar year, and/or to complete modules at their own pace). Nevertheless, the Secretarial courses could claim a certain degree of flexibility because their trainees were allowed to take their external examinations at different times during the year on the recommendation of their Centres.

All the Centres issued their own Certificates of attendance but it was unclear whether these certificates were also Certificates of attainment and whether they had to be endorsed by the DTEVT. In addition, trainees could study for the award of a basic Pitman Certificate in the Commercial subject areas, or for that of a basic City & Guilds Certificate in the Technical subject areas; and 13 (42%) of the Programme Leaders (n = 31) entered their students for the examinations for these external Certificates. Only three (18%) Centres among the 17 targeted Centres claimed to be preparing their students for the award of the DTEVT's National Training Standards Certificate.

It was thought appropriate in this project, to take the "Pass Rate" on each training programme as a quantifiable measure of the programme outcomes (even if it did not necessarily reflect accurately the quality of the teaching/learning process). The Pass Rates were in the range of 91% to 100% (average 99.2%) on the programmes at the end of the academic year 1996/97 and were thus very encouraging indeed ---- even if the trainees on the Secretarial courses who were presented for external assessment had been carefully selected and the assessments for Home Economics and for the Technical subjects were internal (Centre based). The final cumulative individual trainee marks ranged from an

average of 45% on a particular Secretarial course to an average of 78% on a particular Home Economics course (with an average of 61% over all programmes).

Less encouraging and a cause for concern was the limited success of the Centres in retaining their trainees to the end of their programmes. For, on the evidence of the data available, the Retention Rate was on average 84%, with considerable variation across geographical areas, subject areas and types of organisations and an extremely low minimum Retention Rate of 39% on a course in Carpentry in a Private Centre.

Only six (19%) of the Programme Leaders claimed that the Retention Rate on their programmes was 100%. Another revealing finding was that the Retention Rate in the urban areas was only about 60% on the Secretarial courses that were offered at the NGO-operated Centres.

Most paradoxically, twenty-nine (93%) of the Programme Leaders interviewed claimed that they and their staff provided much learner support throughout the duration of the training programmes that they offered. It was therefore difficult to tease out the many interrelated questions that one might ask about the problem of retention on the training programmes (such as questions about the payment of the tuition fees, the trainees' expectations, and the delivery of the programmes); however, one factor which could be related to the problem was that pre-entry support for trainees, in the form of, for example, a systematic approach to helping them make a wise choice of training programmes, was lacking on ten (32%) of the sampled programmes.

The Centres operated with an average Student/Staff Ratio (SSR) of about 12:1 during the academic year 1996/97, in both rural areas and urban areas; however, there was considerable variation across Centres from an SSR of about 7:1 at the *Rural Vocational Training Centre* to one of about 19:1 at the *YMCA Vocational Training Centre* (and there were differences between largely knowledge-based programmes and largely "hands-on", practical programmes).

3.1.2. The resources

This sub-section reports only on the findings about the human resources (the teaching staff) and about the physical resources; the findings about the financial resources are reported later (in section 3.1.4)

3.1.2.1 The Teaching Staff

The group of 17 targeted Centres operated with a total of 125 academic staff, with male and female instructors in almost equal numbers (see Table 7). Most (87%) of them worked full-time at the Centres and 66% were under 35 years old.

An underlying proposition in this survey was that effective vocational training required instructors who possessed pedagogical skills as well as extensive technical knowledge and practical skills which were acquired through many years of work experience (in industry, commerce or the public service). The evidence from this survey was that some 58% of the academic staff had indeed acquired such relevant work experience and that an even greater number (73%) had at least two years of teaching experience in schools. However, only 30% of the teaching staff were teacher-trained and were registered as "qualified instructors" with the DoSE; and only 41% possessed qualifications at degree or diploma level in their subjects, the highest qualification for some being the Higher Teachers' Certificate in subjects which they had studied at Gambia College.

These findings went some way to confirm the view that there is a general shortage of suitably qualified teaching staff in vocational training institutions in many developing countries (Dyankov, 1996). The point was not lost on the Principals of the Centres and thirteen (76%) among them recognised the need for a Staff Development policy although such a policy had been fully formulated in only three Centres and partially formulated in only another five Centres.

Four (13%) of the 31 Programme Leaders interviewed (in the 17 targeted Centres) had participated in DTVET curriculum planning and development at national level; two of them worked at the government *Rural Vocational Training Centre* at Mansakonko and the other two worked in private Centres at the *YMCA Vocational Training Centre* and at the *Quantum Associates Computer Training Centre*, respectively.

The evidence furnished by the respondents in this project showed that many (41%) among the academic staff were non-Gambian nationals and that these expatriate instructors were mostly from other African countries, notably Sierra Leone, Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal.

Table 7:

The profile of the academic staff in the targeted Skills Centres

	Gender	
Age	Male	Female
less than 35 years old	38	44
35 to 45 years old	21	13
more than 45 years old	1	4
age not recorded	0	4
Total	60	65
Highest Qualification		
Degree	5	4
Diploma	18	24
Certificate	29	23
not recorded	8	14
Total	60	65
Teaching Qualification		
Teacher - trained	19	19
not teacher - trained	41	46
Total	60	65
Teaching experience		
(more than 2 years)	51	40
(2 years or less)	9	25
Total	60	65
Work experience (in industry, commerce, public service)		
(more than 2 years)	44	29
(2 years or less)	16	36
Total	60	65
Nationality		
Gambian nationals	32	42
others	28	23
Total	60	65

On the assumption that the teaching staff were key agents for quality assurance and should have therefore been involved in the formulation of their Centres' policies for Staff Development, the Programme Leaders were each asked whether they had participated in the formulation of a Staff Development policy at their Centres; only nine (29%) had.

Both the Principals and the Programme Leaders were asked to indicate what was the "most important" aim of Staff Development (for their teaching staff). The majority (65%) view among the Principals was that the "most important" aim was to update the knowledge and practical skills of the staff in their (the staff) own subject areas. However, Staff Development was an area of disagreement between the Principals and their Programme Leaders as only six (19%) among the latter concurred --- five of them in the field of Home Economics. Three (18%) of the Principals thought that the aim of Staff Development was to improve the teaching methods of the academic staff; they were the Principals of the *Presentation Girls Vocational School*, the *Sobeya Skills Training Centre* and the *Gambia Scouts Association's Vocational Training Centre* at Soma. Only the Principal of the *Brikama Training Centre* was of the opinion that the aim of Staff Development was to develop staff expertise in Curriculum Development, and no Principal supported the view that Staff Development should aim to develop the managerial ability of members of staff. The finding of such minority views among the Principals was further evidence of the difference in perspective between the Principals and their Programme leaders, seventeen (55%) of whom thought that all these aims were important.

Technical support for the teaching staff was nil except in six Centres, three of which were private Centres; it was common practice for the servicing of equipment (such as sewing machines and computers) to be done by outside agencies on a contractual basis.

The number of formal, scheduled student contact hours for those Programme Leaders/Heads of Departments who were interviewed ranged from 18 to 27 hours per week, depending on their grades; the average was 22.8 hours. There were also large pay differentials, with staff salaries varying from D600 to D2,500 per month (depending on status and subject area), and with volunteers receiving

"very meagre allowances and other assistance, on demand, in cases of urgent need".

3.1.2.2..The Physical Resources (see also Appendix III)

Fourteen (82%) of the 17 Centres were well located geographically; of the three other Centres, two were in Banjul on main highways (with heavy traffic throughout the day) and one was in a rural town near the local market where music was often being played seemingly at full volume !

As indicated in Section 3.1, the buildings where the Centres were located were in reasonably good conditions except for a few (n=6). Furthermore, the observational evidence was that the Computer laboratories were on the whole of a good standard; indeed, the one planned for the *Canaan Technical Institute* could be taken as a good example of the standard of equipment required. However, the workshops for Engineering and Construction were poorly furnished even in the Government sponsored Centres, and the maintenance and replacement of equipment for these workshops needed attention very urgently indeed.

Water supply was available in all the Centres. However, in a few Centres washing facilities were either non-existent or inadequate for the size of the student population. Also, the lack of electricity supply was a major problem because trainees were left to work with basic hand tools only (as they did, for example, at the *Brikama Training Centre).*

Courses on "Health and Safety" were part-and-parcel of all the training programmes except for the programmes in the area of Secretarial studies.

On the evidence available, teaching-learning materials were in short supply and adequate library facilities were available in only four (23%) of the 17 Centres; and even then, at two of these Centres the trainees' access to the library was not so straightforward for in one Centre the library was located in the Staff Room and in the other Centre it was in an adjacent building. However, there was some evidence of teaching staff using various aids in their teaching, such as handouts,

flip charts, display charts, old engine blocks as models in Engineering, videos, and in one Centre (the *Quantum Associates Computer Training Centre*) computer software for computer-aided learning.

3.1.3 The management of the Skills Centres

The governance of the targeted Centres was assured either through the Boards of Directors (or Executive Committees) of their parent bodies, as in the case of the *Sobeya Skills Training Centre*, or through their own governing bodies on which the local communities were represented, as at the *Lady Tuti Faal Jammeh Sewing Skills Centre* and at the *Njawara Agricultural Training Centre*. However, local employers were represented on the governing bodies of only four (23%) of the 17 targeted Centres. Also, two privately owned Centres were found delivering training programmes, without the benefit of a governing body: one was a training Centre for Computing and the other was a training centre for Horticulture, Secretarial Studies and Business Studies.

Only ten (59%) of the targeted Centres operated a participatory form of management either through Departmental Committees or through an Academic Board (or some other functionally equivalent Committee) or through both. The academic staff were represented on these Committees but not the trainees, except at the *Boka Loho Skills Training Centre*, where the trainees could attend the meetings of the Academic Board as "observers". Also, at the *Presentation Girls Vocational School* the trainees had a voice on academic matters through the elected "prefects".

The Principals of the Centres which were not organised on departmental lines (because they were one-subject Centres) claimed that together with the teaching staff they took collective responsibility for the planning of the training programmes. The *Lady Tuti Faal-Jammeh Sewing Skills Centre* was one such centre.

The present survey took the question of collective responsibility (for training programmes) still deeper and asked Programme Leaders whether there was collective responsibility for ensuring the quality of the programmes delivered. Twenty-one (68%) Programme Leaders claimed that for each of their respective

programmes there was a formal Programme Committee which monitored the quality of the programme internally throughout the duration of the programme. This monitoring process complemented the **formal**, summative (end-of-programme) evaluation that those twenty-one Programme Leaders (and another seven Programme Leaders) claimed to conduct.

The evidence also showed that four (19%) of those 21 Programme leaders took it to be their responsibility to submit annual, **formal** reports (about their respective programmes) to the relevant Programme Committees; this was, manifestly, a recognition that Programme Committees were the custodians of quality for these four programmes. This stance contrasted sharply with that of seven other Programme Leaders who submitted their annual reports directly and only to the Principals of their respective Centres --- even though Departmental Committees had been set up in these Centres (except in one).

There was some evidence of responsive management as Centres attempted to adjust their operations so as to be adaptive to the need for vocational training in their localities; thus, the *Njawara Agricultural Training Centre* operated through a formal, Village Development Committee, while the *Julangel Skills Training Centre* had set up Catchment Area Committees as part of its management strategy. However, only nine (53%) of the targeted Centres had a certain amount of flexibility for planning new training activities (albeit to varying degrees and within the framework of the current National Policy for Education). Notably among these Centres were the two government organisations, the *Julangel Skills Training Centre* and the *Rural Vocational Training Centre*. However, closing existing training activities was a rather different matter: five Centres had no flexibility whatsoever whilst only two Centres, the *GAM-TRADES Training Centre* and the *Njawara Agricultural Training Centre* claimed to have "much" flexibility in this context.

3.1.4 The Cost of training

Given the very short time allocated for this complex project, the data that could be collected about the cost of providing vocational training at the Skills Centres could only be minimal. Furthermore, the available data were not detailed enough to be

subjected to close inspection and were therefore not amenable to complex analyses.

These difficulties notwithstanding, some relevant information about training costs were obtained. Thus, there were four Centres for which land was provided free either by a local community or by a private landlord. Also, the cost items that respondents listed when questioned were:

- Staff salaries (including those of non-academic staff)
- Capital equipment (including maintenance)
- Building costs (including the rent of premises)
- Consumables (including stationery and teaching-learning materials)
- Miscellaneous (including insurance for trainees on technical programmes and field tips)

Furthermore, some indication of how training costs varied in different organisations, in different subject areas, could be gleaned from the following data:

(a) the "whole expenditure" for delivering five, full-time, two-year programmes in five different subject areas, for 89 trainees in a private Centre in an urban area, was D23,000 for the academic year 1996/97; the Centre was said to be "almost self-financing" because:
   (i) most of the six full-time instructors were volunteers
   (ii) the premises were rent free
   (iii) the cost of capital equipment was met by the parent body
   (iv) an NGO had donated second-hand computers to the Centre
   (v) 60% of the furniture at the Centre was made by the trainees themselves

(b) the documented full cost, per trainee, on a basic, one-year, full-time, modular programme for six trainees in Mechanical Engineering at a parastatal organisation (in an urban area) was D22,497, p.a.

(c) the documented 1997 budget for the "operational expenses" for staff (five academic and three non-academic) for an Agricultural Training Centre which is an NGO in a rural area, was D72,000.

However, the "expenditure method" for measuring the "unit costs" of training is usually relevant only to institutional training modes in the public sector (Middleton,

1993). Also, a rough and ready way of estimating the cost of training one student in a post secondary technical institution, in general, may be based on the proposition that the major operating cost of running a training course is that required for the payment of the teaching staff, and that "one can define the cost of running a course as the number of hours used to teach it over the year" (Jones, 1986); consequently, for each training programme in a particular academic year, an approximate cost of training (in terms of teaching hours), per trainee, for that year, is the number of formal, scheduled hours of trainee contact during that year with the teaching staff (who teach on the programme), divided by the number of students who completed the course successfully by the end of the year.

Given the circumstances of the present project and at the risk of over-simplifying matters, this approach was conveniently used to try and compare "unit costs" for full-time programmes (of 36 weeks duration) across subject areas, socio-economic areas, and types of organisations. The available comparative data are tabulated in Table 8 which, for ease of comparison, gives the cost (in teaching hours), per week, per trainee, assuming that all the full-time programmes were of 36 weeks duration; and the average cost in those terms is 1.77.

Admittedly, this approach ignores the other costs associated with the delivering of training programmes, such as the costs for non-teaching staff and for teaching materials, let alone the costs for capital equipment and buildings specially as in many developing countries equipment is for the most part imported (UNESCO,1984). On the other hand, arguably, incorporated in these calculations is the quality of the training delivered, in so far that they are based on the number of trainees who completed their programmes successfully (as against the number of trainees who enrolled).

Table 8:

The cost (in formal, scheduled teaching hours) per week, per trainee, on training programmes

Type of Organisation	Cost (in teaching hours) for programmes in rural areas			Cost (in teaching hours) for programmes in urban areas		
	Commercial Subjects	Home Economics	Technical Subjects	Commercial Subjects	Home Economics	Technical Subjects
Government	-	2.35	3.00 ***	-	-	-
Parastatal	-	-	-	-	-	4.66
NGO	1.8 **	-	1.98*	1.05*	-	-
Grant - Aided	-	-	-	1.5	1.1	-
Private	0.96	1.02	1.3	1.05	1.2*	-

[Key: * = average cost; ** = for secretarial subjects; *** = for Engineering; - = data not available]

The table shows that consistently vocational training in the rural areas costs more in the Government Centres and in the Centres run by NGOs than in the Private centres; and as is well-known (Middleton, 1993), the cost in the technical subject areas is relatively high.

3.1.5 Cost recovery

One of the strong impressions to come across in this project was that the Centres were making vigorous efforts to recover their costs because training had proved to be a costly enterprise; so much so that two Principals claimed that their Centres had been running at a loss: in one case the loss was D200,000 over the last four years and in the other case, D55,000 last year. Moreover, each had invested his own money into the enterprise.

The Centres attempted to recover their costs in one or more of the following ways:

(a) by charging tuition fees

(b) by soliciting funds from:

(i) central government

(ii) donor agencies

(iii) "friends" overseas

(iv) sister organisations and projects overseas

(c) by income generation through, for example:

(i) selling the goods that they produced

(ii) leasing their training resources and facilities

(iii) miscellaneous activities; for example:

- running other businesses alongside (such as letting the rooms on a floor of their buildings to private tenants, or selling computers)
- organising occasional Open Days, luncheon sales, and musical entertainments
- consultancies (for example, in Computing)

The tuition fee charged by the Centres was D653 per year, on average; however, as Table 9 shows, there was a considerable variation in fee levels, specially in the urban areas, in Commercial subjects and in Home Economics. Accounting practices varied too, so that the tuition fees that some Centres quoted might include other fees, such as an annual registration fee, examination fees, and a fee for the consumable materials used for practical work (for example, in Home Economics for sewing lessons).

Four private Centres were able to reconcile two seemingly contradictory notions: the notion of running a training institution as a business enterprise (and therefore recovering costs and making profit) and the philanthropist notion of waiving tuition fees in deserving cases. One conspicuous example was that of a private Centre in a rural area, which claimed that it sponsored 29 trainees (15 male and 14 female).

Among the Centres that were NGOs one stood out because tuition was free, as all of its 150 trainees were sponsored by its parent organisation.

A few Private Centres reported having applied for government grants and/or for land to be allocated to them but (in what looked like a disengagement of government) they had so far been refused either or both.

Yet a Principal in one of the Centres explained that subvention was their "only hope". Grants were needed for teachers' salaries and for technical equipment and materials; and indeed another Principal claimed that his Centre would be self-financing if it were not for the cost of capital equipment. As mentioned already, Centres reported receiving donations in cash or in kind (such as typing equipment) from various donors.

Whilst all Centres encouraged their staff to undertake profitable income-generating activities, the scope for such activities locally varied somewhat and there could be a geographical dimension, with rather more scope for profitable activities in the urban areas (specially in Centres which offered training in Computing) than in the rural areas. However. the government-funded Centres (the *Rural Vocational Training Centre*, at Mansakonko and the *Julangel Skills Training Centre*, at Fuladu) were both exploiting the opportunities for additional sources of revenue through, for example, selling the produce of their vegetable gardens and that of a wood lot and through charging for their services when clients used their welding machine.

Table 9:

Tuition fees (Dalasis), per year, for full-time training programmes at the Skills Centres

Type of Organisation	Programmes in Rural areas			Programmes in Urban areas		
	Commercial Subjects	Home Economics	Technical Subjects	Commercial Subjects	Home Economics	Technical Subjects
NGO	750	-	600 (Carpentry)	525	525	-
Grant-Aided Centre	-	-	-	750	750	-
Private Centre	633 *	-	600 (Agriculture)	850 **	550 ***	650

[Note - = data not available

* = average tuition fee for three Centres in this category, fees were D600 and D700

** = average tuition fee for two Centres in this category, fees were D1,050 and D650

***= average tuition fee for two centres in this category, fees were D450 and D650

(a) for part-time programmes the tuition fee was D25 per hour in two Centres that were private Centres for Computing and in an NGO Centre for Agriculture

(b) fees did not always include registration fees and examination fees]

There was evidence of income generation being facilitated by "revolving funds", although this term was not used. For example, at the *Baka Loho Skills Training Centre*. the Textiles section was responsible for the production of the Centre's "school uniforms" and the proceeds from the sale of these uniforms was used to buy more materials for the uniforms. In the rural areas, the *Njawara Agricultural Training Centre* had been producing 10,000 seedlings per year since 1993, of which 50% was planted at the Centre, 20% was issued to farmers and 30% sold for the maintenance of the Centre.

3.2 THE ENROLMENT OF TRAINEES

Table 10 highlights the much larger intake (n = 825) of female trainees in the urban areas (during the academic year 1996/97), relative to:

(a) the enrolment of female trainees in the rural areas (n = 180)

(b) the enrolment of male trainees in the urban areas (n = 206).

This important finding was to be expected given the relatively large number of Centres offering training programmes in the traditionally female subject areas of Home Economics and Commerce, in the urban areas. Another important finding was that 90% of the trainees on the Home Economics programme at the *Boka Loho Skills Training Centre* were "women returners" according to the Principal.

Table 10:

The distribution of trainees in the targeted Skills Centres *by* educational background, geographical area, and gender.

Geographical Area	Educational Background						Total		Grand Total
	Primary School Education		Middle School Education		Secondary School Education				
	male	female	male	female	male	female	male	female	
Rural	82	43	86	12	22	125	190	**180**	370
Urban	21	161	59	409	126	255	**206**	**825**	**1031**
Total	103	204	145	421	148	380	396	1005	1401

Only five (29%) of the 17 targeted Centres recruited their trainees on the basis of their success in the Centres' own entrance examinations. The Government sponsored Centres and the NGO-run Centres admitted applicants on the evidence of satisfactory school reports. Two private Centres, one in an urban area and the other in a rural area, described respectively their recruitment policies in very graphic terms, thus: "we accept anyone irrespective of educational background" and " we accept anything that comes our way". One of the Centres argued that, in point of fact, the DTEVT had "no criterion of literacy and numeracy" and that the Centre was therefore justified to admit anyone.

In stark contrast, the stance of three other Centres (two Private organisations and one NGO) was to provide a one-year "pre-vocational, foundation" course to early school leavers in a genuine attempt (as one Centre put it) "to help school drop-outs to catch up again", because these so-called "drop-outs" or "push outs" were "liabilities".

Table 11 shows the sponsorship of trainees by Government, Parastatals, Private Centres, and other organisations and projects (such as NGOs, the Roman Catholic Mission, the German-Gambia Initiative); the sponsorships had provided access to training, free of charge, for 407 trainees, that is, 29% of all the trainees enrolled in the targeted Centres (see Table 10) during the academic year 1996/97.

Table 11:

The number of sponsored trainees in the targeted Skills Centres *by* gender and type of sponsoring organisations.

Type of Sponsoring Organisations	Number of male sponsored trainees	Number of female sponsored trainees	Total
Government and Parastatal Organisations	62	12	74
Other organisations (NGOs and donor agencies)	79	204	283
Private Centres	33	17	50
Total	174	233	407

Table 11 highlights the fact that the "other organisations" had intervened in the supply of training through positive action in favour of female trainees, Outstanding among these organisations for its provision for the training of girls was the *Sobeya Skills Training Centre*. However, the gender difference in the sponsorship of training was reinforcing the present stereotyping of fields of study and of occupations, with female trainees enrolling on courses in Commercial subject areas and Home Economics and male trainees enrolling on courses in Technical subject areas, even if, according to the Principals of the Centres visited, it was not for lack of trying to enrol women and girls on their traditionally male programmes. In point of fact, in seven (41 %) of the targeted Centres, "strong" efforts had been made in that direction. Thus, NAWEC's *Kotu Training Centre* had advertised on radio and in newspapers for "meter readers" but 90% of applicants were males; and the Gambia Scouts Association's *Little Trees*

Skills Training Centre had not succeeded in their "very strong" effort to retain girls on its male dominated programmes (Carpentry and Welding); to quote the Principal:

> "they (the female trainees) started but decided to switch over to secretarial studies"

And for its part, the Government's *Rural Vocational Training Centre* had already recruited a total of four female trainees on its Engineering and Construction programmes. However, there were encouraging signs that Centres were beginning to consider offering other male-dominated training programmes which could attract women and girls such as basic programmes in Journalism and in Photography, as was evident from an interview with the Principal of the *Sobeya Skills Training Centre*.

3.3. HOW STRONG WAS THE ARTICULATION BETWEEN TRAINING PROGRAMMES AND THE WORKPLACE?

One of the claims that the Centres frequently made was that they were "a response to the growing need" to train school leavers in skills that were relevant to reducing the increasing rate of unemployment in The Gambia and to promoting economic development. Consequently, the present project enquired into how the Centres were establishing and maintaining institutional links with employers so as to ensure that their training programmes were well articulated with the workplace and therefore effective. The project focused on:

(a) the placements of trainees in industry, commerce and the public service
(b) the destinations of the Centres' graduates
(c) the participation of employers in curriculum development
(d) the preparation of trainees for employment and self-employment.

3.3.1 Placements

The evidence from the 17 targeted Centres was that supervised work experience in industry/commerce/the public service was mandatory on the full-time programmes at the two Government Centres, at the parastatal Centre, at the grant-aided Centre and at three of the four NGO-run Centres, though not on all Home Economics programmes. It also transpired from the questionnaire data that only two (33%) of the

six private Centres which offered full-time programmes had made such supervised work experience mandatory on their programmes; and that at both private Centres the placements were for trainees in the field of Secretarial studies.

Overall, the evidence was that supervised work experience in industry/commerce/the public service on full-time training programmes was:

(a) mandatory on programmes in Home Economics and in technical subject areas at the two Government sponsored Centres

(b) mandatory on most (70%) of the programmes for Secretarial studies. In this connection. an interesting observation was that at the *YMCA Vocational Training Centre*, the attachment of trainee secretaries was not mandatory; and that it came at the end of their training programmes at the Centre, when the Pass list for the examination candidates was forwarded to the DTEVT and to other employers and trainees were selected for placements. The argument for putting placements at the end of the training programmes was that the probability of the trainees securing employment with the organisations where they were placed was greatly increased in this way.

(c) not mandatory on programmes in Home Economics (expect on those offered at the two Government sponsored Centres, at the grant-aided Centre and at one NGO.)

On average, the proportion of time allocated to supervised work experience on the targeted training programmes was 13.8 % . However, the proportions varied greatly from the maximum of 33% in Home Economics at the *Rural Vocational Training Centre* to the minimum of 5% in Secretarial studies at the *GAM-Trades Skills Training Centre*

3.3.2. Graduates' destinations

As Table 12 shows, four Centres claimed to have put in place a system for tracing the first destinations of their graduates, while eight Centres were planning to do so, even though some had only recently been launched.

Table 12

The number of Skills Centres which had set up a tracer system *by* type of organisation and geographical area.

Type of Organisation	Tracer System					
	In Rural Areas			In Urban Areas		
	In place	Being planned	Not being planned	In place	Being planned	Not being planned
Government	1	1	-	-	-	-
Parastatal	-	-	-	1	-	-
Grant-aided	-	-	-	-	1	-
NGO	1	1	-	1	1	-
Private	-	2	2	-	2	3
Total	2	4	2	2	4	3

When questioned about the proportions of their full-time trainees (who graduated during the 1996/97 academic year) who had obtained employment or who had become self-employed, only five (29%) Centres responded, partly because in the recently set up Centres, the students had not yet come to the end of their training programmes.. Nevertheless, what leaped out of the data was that

(a) three of these five Centres were private Centres which offered training programmes in the Secretarial field
(b) the three Centres were located in three socio-economically different Divisions.

There were several tangled issues here and one was that there was probably a geographical factor to take into account. For, at one of the Centres, the *Gambia Scouts Association's Vocational Training Centre* at Soma, in the Lower River Division,

the proportion of graduates who had obtained employment immediately after graduating stood at only 5%, in sharp contrast to the proportion (60%) at the *Brikama Training Centre* in the Western Division and to the proportion (50%) at the *YMCA Vocational Training Centre* in the Kombo St Mary Division. Indeed, these last two Centres claimed that most of their graduates obtained employment six months to a year after graduating.

3.3.3 Employers' participation in curriculum development

The effectiveness of pre-employment, vocational training for the low-level workforce depends largely on relating the content of training programmes to the skills that employers require and that are necessary for economic development. This fit between training content and skills demand requires the establishment of a close link between the Skills Centres and the workplace through, for example, the participation of employers in curriculum development (in addition to other approaches, such as surveys to find out about employers' needs for a trained labour force).

Although crucial aspects of this possible link are not susceptible to numerical measurement, the present project attempted to determine quantitatively the extent to which local employers had participated actively in the development of the training programmes offered at the Centres by using a four-point scale, as shown in Table 13. The table summarises the findings from the Programme Leaders' responses. It shows that 18 (58%) of the Programme Leaders (n = 31) questioned, claimed that employers had participated, at least to some extent, in the development of their programmes and that their participation tended to be more active in the Commercial and Technical subject areas than in Home Economics (both in the rural areas and in the urban areas). And, as noted already, the Commercial and Technical subject areas were the very ones in which trainees took the externally set examinations for Pitman's Certificates and for CGLI's Certificates, respectively. There must therefore be a question about the nature of the employers' involvement in curriculum development and in the localisation of examinations in these two subject areas.

Table 13:

The number of programmes on which employers participated in curriculum development *by* geographical area and subject areas.

Geographical Area		Extent of employers' participation			
		Very large extent	Large extent	some extent	No participation
Rural Area	C	2	-	-	1
	H	-	1	-	3
	T	2	1	1	3
Urban Area	C	2	3	1	2
	H	-	1	2	2
	T	2	-	-	2
Total		8	6	4	13

[Key: C = Commercial subject areas, H = Home Economics, T = Technical subject areas]

One further exploration of the link between the Centres and employers was important though. For, whilst the participation of employers in curriculum development might help greatly in making training programmes relevant to meeting the needs of employers for a skilled workforce, from a wider perspective, the co-operation between the Centres and local employers might benefit too from an exchange of information between them. For this reason, the seventeen Principals of the Centres were also asked how much information did they give to local employers about their training programmes. Twelve (70%) claimed that they provided such information to employers although they differed in the amount of information that they provided. Also, the amount of information provided was sometimes another area of disagreement between the Principals and their Programmes Leaders, with the claims of the latter exceeding those of the former, probably because the Programme Leaders were directly responsible for marketing their training programmes as part of their management function.

Regrettably, for one reason and another, it proved difficult to meet employers at most of the Centres visited. Nevertheless, two employers in the rural areas were

interviewed and the interviews yielded pertinent data about training for the low-level labour force. Thus, it became very apparent during interviews that vocational training was "a huge problem" in the rural areas and that it was necessary to recruit expatriates (specially, Senegalese) for Sewing and for Carpentry. One of the interviewees claimed that he had never received any information about the local Vocational Skills Centre. The other Interviewee explained that the only involvement of the local community with the local Skills Centre was when school leavers applied for a place at the Centre; however, the Centre did help the community with, for example, making hoes and repairing implements.

3.3.4. Preparation for employment and self-employment

Some 90 % of the economically active population of The Gambia work in the rural and urban informal sectors. Many among them are self-employed farmers or self-employed owners of small businesses (in both rural and urban sectors); and one of the stated aims of the Skills Centres was to prepare their trainees for income-earning activities generally, and for self-employment. Thus, the *Njawara Agricultural Training Centre* stated quite explicitly that one of its aims was "to increase self-employment and self-sufficiency" and in the same vein, the Gambia Scouts Association's *Little Trees Skills Training Centre* explained that the Centre was a "**TESITO** (self-help) project" which "would help to reduce the unemployment rate in the country and to escalate the number of self-employed personnel (entrepreneurs)".

The evidence from the fieldwork was that too few (42%) among the 31 Programme Leaders questioned gave advice and support to their students in their search for jobs, towards the end of their training programmes, and immediately after. Nevertheless, the support was wide ranging and consisted, in general, of the following:

(a) writing individual letters (of introduction) to employers

(b) writing testimonials for the trainees

(c) helping the trainees to complete application forms (for jobs)

(d) visiting local organisations with the trainees to see the equipment and other facilities available at the workplace

(e) providing moral support to trainees "in the form of discussions"

(f) keeping in contact with the graduates (by telephone)

(g) informing graduates about employers' requests for skilled personnel

(h) advising graduates to liaise with the DTEVT for information about job opportunities

One Centre, the *Quantum Associates Computer Training Centre* had sometimes adopted a strategy which aimed at helping specifically those trainees who had not succeeded in obtaining placements; they were employed on projects (such as surveys) which the Centre was contracted to undertake.

There was evidence that self-employment was actively encouraged and was included in the advice that Centres gave to graduates and to trainees who were coming towards the end of their training programmes. Indeed, a few Centres were pursuing actively strategies aimed at providing concrete support to the graduates; for, undoubtedly, there was a realisation that whilst their graduates would have acquired sufficient technical skills to provide a service or to produce marketable goods, working on their own, they needed additional support and this was likely to include a start-up capital and appropriate tools. Thus, the Government sponsored *Rural Vocational Training Centre* at Mansakonko had moved in that direction and introduced a "compulsory savings scheme" (on its full-time "In-centre" training programme) according to which the trainees saved D80 out of their monthly stipend, throughout the training period. The aim was to use the savings to help them obtain a "starter set of tools" for self-employment on graduating. Moreover, the Centre's part-time " In-Village " training programme had blazed the trail when it was launched (in 1980) for selected young adults; they were paid a stipend and given a "resettlement package" at the end of their training to enable them to start their own businesses. The package consisted in building workshops for them and in providing them with a set of appropriate tools.

Even as the evidence was accumulating from the *Rural Vocational Training Centre* (and from the *Julangel Skills Training Centre* too) that a strong impetus had been given to overcoming the dual problem of unemployment and urban drift from the rural areas, a question which came to the fore was the extent to which the Agricultural Extension Services were being used to introduce farmers to new farm technologies. In this connection, the present survey found that the *Njawara Agricultural Training Centre* had initiated a scheme whereby the selection of applicants for training was

made in conjunction with extension workers and on the basis of the applicants' potential for self-employment coupled with their ability to help generate income for the Centre (from the sale of their produce). Furthermore, the National Institute for Agricultural Research was collaborating with the Centre in projects such as the development of a "Trees Nursery System".

Yet another approach to preparing trainees for self-employment in the rural areas was evident at the *Chamen Agricultural Vocational Training Centre*. The approach combined the notion of "compulsory savings" with that of a "resettlement package" but in a different way from that adopted at the *Rural Vocational Training Centre* at Mansakonko. Each trainee at the Centre cultivated 1.5 hectares of land (for cereals and groundnuts) and the produce was shared with the Centre thus: 40% of the produce was for the Centre, 40% was for the trainee, and 20% was for an "input" for buying materials such as fertilisers. The trainee's share (40%) constituted in effect a form of "compulsory savings" and its cash value was used to buy tools for the trainee at the end of the training programme.

The present project also found an important shift in the Skills Training Programme which **ACTION AID** offered as a component of its "integrated Rural Development Programmes". Originally, the aim of these programmes had been to train rural village youths and "school dropouts" to a level that would allow them to become self-employed. However, the "turnover of the beneficiaries" of these programmes had saturated the local artisan markets so that "the majority of them migrated to the urban areas rendering the whole idea counterproductive". Consequently, a shift in strategy became necessary and the emphasis was put instead on upgrading the skills level of existing artisans through research into the development of prototypes (of farm implements and other labour saving devices) and through related short courses.

3.4 WHAT WAS THE QUALITY OF THE TRAINING PROVIDED?

An operational definition of the term "quality" in the training context is difficult since quality is a multifaceted concept. Also, "measuring educational quality, in Africa as elsewhere, is problematic" (Samoff, 1996). However, the present survey conceptualised training as a process which transforms inputs into outputs; and, consequently, the survey focused on variables which could be said to relate, respectively, to the quality of the inputs, to the quality of the outputs and to the quality of the training process itself. The variables are referred to as educational indicators (of quality) in Table 14. The table is a summary of those findings in the previous sections of this report that, arguably, relate to the quality of training provision. Each indicator of quality in the table refers either directly or indirectly to a particular aspect of the activities of Skills Centres. The list of indicators is restricted to those for which there were quantifiable measures. The respective values for the measures are those given earlier in the report (in the relevant sections).

It goes without saying that any one indicator on its own does not provide an adequate measure of the overall quality of the training provided at the Centres as a whole. For example, the Student/Staff Ratio (as a measure of programme efficiency), or the Pass Rate, or even the employability of the graduates (as a measure of programme effectiveness), each on its own, is unlikely to reflect accurately the quality of the training provided at the Centres. Consequently, to help inform thinking on the issue of quality (with reference to the Skills Centres), the two-dimensional matrix shown in Table 15 was drawn. The table served as a framework for assessing the overall quality of the training provided at the Centres. It displays both the apparent areas of strength observed at the Centres and the apparent areas of weakness, using a range of educational indicators; and thereby pin-pointing the deficiencies that should be remedied in order to do justice to the commitment of the Centres to try and provide worthwhile, quality training.

Table 14:

The indicators and measures of the quality of training provision

1. The INPUTS

The Educational indicators	The measures	The values
(a) The trainees (as inputs)		
The entry-level qualifications	The percentage of entrants who were Middle/Secondary School leavers	78% (74%male, 80% female)
The admissions policy	The percentage of Centres that admitted trainees on the basis of an entrance examination	29%
Positive action in the sponsorship of trainees	The percentage of sponsored entrants who were female	57%
The Retention of trainees on programmes	The average percentage of trainees who completed their programmes (The Retention Rate)	84% (min 39% max 100%)
(b) The teaching staff (as inputs)		
Academic qualifications	The percentage of teaching staff who held a degree or diploma in their subjects	41%
Teacher-training qualification	The percentage of teaching staff who were teacher-trained	30%
Teaching experience	The percentage of teaching staff with teaching experience (in schools)	73%
Work experience	The percentage of teaching staff with work experience	58%
Experience in curriculum development	The percentage of teaching staff with experience in curriculum development at national level	12.5%
Formal scheduled teaching	The average number of formal, scheduled trainee contact hours, per week, per teacher.	22.8 hrs (min 18hrs max 27hrs)
Student/Staff Ratio (SSR)	The overall, average SSR	12 : 1 (min7 1 max 19 1)
Technical support for teaching staff	The percentage of Centres which employed technical support staff	35%
(c) The physical conditions (as inputs)		
	The percentage of Centres where the physical conditions (e.g. the state of maintenance of the building site, the size of teaching rooms and of workshops) were on the whole adequate.	47%
(d) The physical resources and facilities (as inputs)		
	The percentage of Centres where the physical resources and facilities (e.g. equipment, tools, supplies, teaching-learning materials, library and computing facilities) were on the whole adequate.	47%
(e) The financial resources (as inputs)		
	The overall, average cost (in teaching hours), per week, per trainee.	1.77 (min 0.96 max 4.66)

Table 14: (continued)

2. The OUTPUTS: *Trainees' achievements*

The Educational indicators	The measures	The values
The Pass Rate	The average percentage of passes among the trainees presented for assessment by examining bodies	99.2% (min 91% max 100%)
The Standard of achievement	The overall average percentage mark obtained by trainees in the assessments by examining bodies	61% (min 45% max 78%)
The Employability of graduates	The average percentage of graduates employed (including those self-employed) immediately after graduating	38% (min 5% max 60%)

3. The PROCESSES

The provision for learner support	The percentage of Programme Leaders who claimed to provide learner support at various stages (i) at the pre-entry stage (ii) on the training programmes (iii) towards the end of the training programmes	 (i) 68% (ii) 93% (iii) 42%
The process of tracing graduates' first destinations	The percentage of Centres where a tracer system was in place	23%
The process of Certification	The percentage of training programmes which led to (i) Certificates awarded by external examining bodies (ii) The NCTEVT's National Training Standards Certificate	 (i) 42% (ii) 18%
The placements of trainees for Supervised Work Experience (SWE)	(a) The percentage of programmes on which SWE was mandatory (i) for Secretarial programmes (ii) for Technical Subjects programmes (iii) for Home Economics programmes	 (i) 70% (ii) 60% (iii) 25%
	(b) The average percentage of time allotted to placements on the training programmes	13.8% (min 5% max 33%)
The process of curriculum development	The percentage of Programme Leaders who claimed that local employers had participated in the development of their programmes	58%
Quality Control and Quality Assurance (The process of controlling and assuring the quality of the training programmes)	(i) The percentage of Programme Leaders who claimed that there was a formal Programme Committee in place (for monitoring quality)	(i) 68%
	(ii) The percentage of Programme leaders who submitted annual formal reports (about their programmes) to their Programme Committees	(ii) 19%
	(iii) The percentage of Programme Leaders who conducted formal, summative, programme evaluations	(iii) 90%
The Management process	(a) The percentage of Centres where local employers were represented on the governing bodies	23%
	(b) The percentage of Centres which operated a participatory form of management	59%
	(c) The percentage of Centres in which a Staff development policy had been (i) fully formulated (ii) partially formulated	(i) 18% (ii) 29%
	(d) The percentage of Programme Leaders who claimed to have participated in the formulation of their Centres' Staff development policy	29%

Table 15:
An overview of the areas of strength and of the areas of weakness observed at the Centres

[Note: This table is intended to give only an overview of the areas of strength and of the areas of weakness observed at the Centres as a whole;the table does not give a picture of what any one Centre is like. The decision as to whether the obtained value in Table 14 for a particular measure points to an area of strength or to one of weakness is a matter of subjective judgement, specially as the range of values for many measures was considerable.]

	Areas of Strength	Areas of Weakness
INPUTS	• The entry-level qualifications of trainees • The availability of sponsorships for female trainees • The previous teaching experience of the teachers • The Student/Staff Ratio (SSR)	• The admission policies adopted • The Retention Rate • The academic and teaching qualifications of the teachers • The previous work experience of the teachers • The experience of the teaching staff in national curriculum development • The number of hours of formal teaching, per teacher, per week • The technical support for teachers • The physical conditions, physical resources and facilities at the Centres • The financial resources available
OUTPUTS	• The Pass Rate for candidates presented for examination • The average mark/grade in the examinations	• The likelihood of obtaining employment or of becoming self-employed on graduating (in occupations for which the graduates were trained)
PROCESSES	• Learner support during training • The strategies for encouraging self-employment (in the rural areas) • The emphasis placed on certificates awarded by external examining bodies • Mandatory work experience in Secretarial and Technical subject areas • The establishment of formal Programme Committees • The Programme Leaders' formal, summative, evaluations of their programmes	• Learner support: (i) at the pre-entry stage (ii) towards the end of the training programmes (for job search) • The absence of a tracer system • The lack of interest in the NCTEVT's National Training Standards Certificate • Mandatory work experience on Home Economics programmes • The arrangements for Placements in industry/ commerce/ the public service • The failure of Programme Leaders to submit their reports to their Programme Committees • The lack of representation of local employers (i) on governing bodies (ii) in the development of training programmes • The non- participatory form of management • The absence of Staff Development policies • The lack of teacher participation in the formulation of Staff Development policies

SECTION 4 CONCLUSION and RECOMMENDATIONS

It is necessary, in concluding, to put this project in context again and to reiterate the present government policy for post Basic Education in The Gambia. As indicated in Section 1, the policy includes ensuring the transition of 25% of the Basic Education graduates to vocational Skills Centres; and the **Vision 2020** document (GG,1996) makes a similar point when it states that the overall strategy for Human Resource Development in The Gambia includes making available "more openings" for students " who do not wish to or are unable to continue into the academic stream" to pursue further their education (after Grade 9) into Skills Centres. It may therefore be presumed that such policy statements have been encouraging signs for those who have sought to provide vocational training for the low-level labour force and to bring such training into line with the demands of the economy. Furthermore, since another message from the Government has been that a key to economic vitality is a market-driven private sector, it may also be presumed that it was unlikely that the Government would have had a direct hand in the establishment of many more Skills Centres; it was more likely that the Government would sanction the efforts of private individuals and organisations to penetrate further into the training market. And indeed this is what has happened, as the prolific growth in the number of registered C1 Skills Centres shows.

The overall, empirical conclusion from the general thrust of the data collected is that the quality of the training programmes offered at present at the Centres is characterised by a mix of strengths and weaknesses (as identified in Section 3.4). This is not surprising given the proliferation of provision, but the strengths should not conceal the weaknesses.

The other important conclusions are as follows:

a) the DTEVT is in dire need of adequate resourcing without which it cannot ensure the efficient and effective monitoring and control of the Centres.
b) the limited amount of part-time, in-service, off-the-job training provision in the C1 Skills Centres in the urban areas is likely to be damaging to the national interest (by not alleviating the problem of skills shortages through upgrading the skills of the low-level labour force).
c) the failure to recruit more female trainees on traditionally male-dominated programmes deserves close examination.

d) the concentration of the Centres on three subject areas (Commercial, Home Economics and Technical) is likely to be detrimental to the development of the wide range of talents (specially the creative, artistic talents) among school leavers

e) It is not sufficiently clear what the educational aims and objectives of the Centres are and what are the expected first destinations of the graduates.

f) the terms Skills Centres and Skills Training as used in The Gambia need to be subjected to clear definitions; these terms are at present a source of confusion and the present notion of "skills" seems to be based essentially on the traditional view of the craftworker.

g) the diversity of Centres is so great (given the differences in socio-economic areas, subject areas offered and types of organisations) that generalisations about the cost-effectiveness of the Centres are not particularly informative at present.

Proceeding on the assumption that the socio-economic policies and the institutional decentralisation process mentioned in **Vision 2020** are being implemented and that it would be an advantage to develop further a responsive training market in The Gambia, a number of recommendations are made below with the aim of helping to improve the training provided in the C1 Skills Centres for the low-level labour force. The recommendations are intended to meet the following objectives for enhancing the quality of training programmes at the C1 Skills Centres:

OBJECTIVE I (*for policy implementation*):

- to develop clear definitions of the increasing responsibilities of the DTEVT in connection with the implementation of the Revised Education Policy 1988-2003 (DoSE, 1997) with regard to vocational training at the C1 Skills Centres.

OBJECTIVE II (*for curriculum review and innovation*):

- to review the structure and content of the training programmes offered at present at the Centres and develop new, innovative programmes.

OBJECTIVE III (*for institutional management*):

- to promote good practice in the management of the Centres.

OBJECTIVE IV (*for resource allocation*):

- to fund new initiatives for increasing the volume of training provided at the Centres and improving the quality of the training programmes.

4.1 Recommendations

The recommendations that are linked to each objective are listed below. Understandably, skills training for the low-level labour force is but one element in the broader context of socio-economic development that **Vision 2020** anticipates. However, so far as could be established, the C1 Skills centres could contribute significantly to this development given the necessary legislation, regulations and resources and the joint efforts of Central government, employers and the Centres themselves.

4.1.1

Recommendations for policy implementation (Objective I)

1 The DoSE should specify the responsibilities and powers of the DTEVT with regard to the C1 Skills Centres nation-wide and should:

(a) review the staff establishment of the DTEVT and enlarge it, if necessary, to ensure that a DTEVT officer has overall responsibility for:

(i) formulating a Development Plan for the Centres (to implement the recommendations of this report) and submitting the plan to the DTEVT for approval

(ii) implementing the approved Development Plan

(b) clarify the relationship between the responsibilities and powers of the DTEVT and those of the local Education Authorities in the Administrative Areas, with regard to the vocational training provided by the Centres and to the financial provision and arrangements for such training.

(c) draft the legislation to empower the DTEVT to exercise its responsibilities in connection with the registration, governance and management of the Centres and with the delivery of their training programmes.

2 The DoSE should also devise a new regulatory framework to incorporate additional rules and regulations which will enable the DTEVT to discharge its responsibility for:

(i) registering C1 Skills Centres (on the basis of their compliance with stated minimum requirements)

(ii) monitoring the performance of the Centres (against a set of specified performance indicators).

3 The DTEVT should draw up guidelines to enable each C1 Skills Centre to put in place its own

(i) Quality Assurance System

(ii) Management Information System

(iii) Tracer System.

4 The DTEVT should initiate discussions with the C1 Skills Centres and other appropriate bodies about:

(a) introducing a "Peer Review" system for the periodic, institutional evaluation of each registered Centre.

(b) setting up a National Skills Training Organisation to promote co-operation and networking among the Centres and contribute to the establishment and maintenance of standards in skills training

(c) setting up in each Division, a joint public-private Technical Education sub-committee of the Divisional Co-ordinating Committee with the specific responsibility of collaborating with the DTEVT and with the Training Centres in the Division to ensure the delivery of vocational training which is relevant to local needs.

5 The NCTEVT should advise Government about the establishment and maintenance of more government-sponsored C1 Skills Centres, and about encouraging the expansion of the private training sector.

4.1.2

Recommendations for curriculum review and innovation (Objective II)

It is recommended that the DTEVT should:

1 initiate discussions with the Skills Centres and appropriate bodies in order to:

(a) review the curriculum of the C1 Skills Centres in terms of its structure, and content with special regard to ensuring that the following are mandatory on all programmes:

(i) a core element of

- general education (through the medium of the English language)
- "transferable skills" (such as those required for problem-solving and for team work).

(ii) an appropriate period of supervised work experience in industry, or commerce, or the public service.

(b) pilot training programmes that are innovative (in structure, content, delivery, mode of assessment and mode of attendance) in the government sponsored Centres in order to:

(i) meet the need for a skilled labour force in areas where new local developments are being launched (such as the development of tourism and fisheries in the North Bank Division)

(ii) attract female school leavers and women returners, as appropriate, to basic studies in subject areas like Art & Design, Performing Arts, Child Minding, Photography, Communication, the Media, Bookbinding, West African Culture, Horticulture, Transport, Environmental Science, Information Technologies, and Electronics.

(iii) meet the need of employers for flexible workers with multiple skills capable of working in more than one trade.

[2] organise national workshops in order to:

(a) explain to school pupils, teachers, parents, and employers

(i) the present framework of available vocational qualifications in The Gambia.

(ii) the relevance of the NCTEVT's National Training Standards (NTS) Certificate for indicating the level of competence in a particular trade.

(iii) the standard of the NTS Certificate

(iv) the distinction between the NTS Certificate and the other qualifications within the framework such as those of the City & Guilds of London Institute.

(b) work with subject specialists (among the teaching staff in the various categories of Vocational Training Centres) to develop a comprehensive portfolio of syllabuses for the award of the NTS Certificate.

[3] require all the C1 Skills Centres to provide training at least to the level of the NTS Certificate (in those subject areas where it is available).

4.1.3

Recommendations for institutional management (Objective III)

It is recommended that the DTEVT should:

[1] organise national workshops for the staff and managers of C1 Skills Centres in order to:

(a) explain to them

(i) why each Centre should put in place:

- a Quality Assurance System
- a Management Information System
- a Tracer System

(ii) how each of these systems can be set up

(iii) how each system operates in practice.

(b) work with them in formulating policies for the following and advise them on implementing these policies:

(i) Staff Development

(ii) Learner support (including support at the pre-entry stage)

(iii) Marketing their training programmes and services.

[2] require the registered C1 Skills Centres to:

(a) develop a participatory form of management by setting up (as appropriate)

(i) Management Boards

(ii) Formal Departmental Committees

(b) ensure that

(i) the teaching staff and local employers are represented on the Management Boards

(ii) the trainees are represented on the formal Departmental Committees.

3 require the C1 Skills Centres in each Division to collaborate with the proposed Divisional Technical Education Sub-Committee for conducting periodic sample surveys of the local labour market and identifying skills shortages locally.

4.1.4

Recommendations for resource allocation (Objective IV)

1 The DTEVT should apply for funds (for both capital and recurrent expenditures) from the following, in order to implement the Skills Centres Development Plan referred to in section 4.1.1, in the short-to-medium term:

(a) Central Government

(b) International donor agencies

(c) The private sector of the economy

2 Funds should be allocated for Capital expenditures, for:

(a) the implementation of Capital Development plans for building, furnishing, equipping and maintaining new government sponsored C1 Skills Centres

(b) the procurement of Capital equipment for the existing government sponsored C1 Skills Centres.

(c) providing loans under specified conditions to the private C1 Skills Centres for the procurement of essential Capital equipment

3 Funds should also be allocated for launching:

(a) the following developmental activities:

- Curriculum Review and Curriculum Development (for new subject areas)
- Staff Development for the teaching staff (both in their subject specialisms and in pedagogy).
- Management training for the Principals of the C1 Skills Centres and for Programme Leaders/Heads of Departments.
- putting in place a Quality Assurance System, a Management Information System, and a Tracer System

(b) a national sensitisation campaign about the benefits of Skills Training

- for economic development, in general
- for female school leavers and women returners to education and training.

(c) a national campaign to raise the awareness of school pupils, teachers, parents and employers about the value of the Gambian National Training Standards Certificate.

(d) a national conference to review :

(i) the aims and objectives of the TEVT system in The Gambia,

(ii) the status, structure and operation of the system,

(iii) the place of the Skills Centres in the system.

(e) a study to assess the impact that the existing government-maintained C1 Skills Centres have made on local labour markets and on the rural-urban drift

4 Government grants should be made available, under specified conditions, for the following:

(a) the proposed joint, public-private, Technical Education sub-committee of the Divisional Co-ordinating Committee for each Division, for:

(i) conducting periodic sample surveys of the local labour market

(ii) identifying skills shortages locally.

(b) trainees at the C1 Skills Centres who are on training programmes specifically aimed at

(i) reducing skills shortages locally

(ii) attracting female school leavers and women returners locally

(c) employers who sponsor off-the-job training programmes (which are provided at the C1 Skills Centres)

(d) a one-month study visit to an appropriate British university to enable the DTEVT Officer responsible for implementing the Skills Centres Development Plan to:

(i) review the recent literature (on vocational curricula, training programmes and the management of vocational training institutions) and report.

(ii) visit selected vocational training institutions in Britain and report.

(e) the purchase of a small stock of recent publications (about vocational curricula, training programmes and the management of vocational training institutions) for the DTEVT reference library.

(f) the installation of essential office equipment and facilities (such as a direct line telephone system, personal computers, fax machines and e-mail facilities) for **all** the DTEVT professional staff, as appropriate.

Recommendations of the National Consultation Workshop

The workshop recommended that:

1. Government should transfer to the DoSE all the funds that are collected through the National Training Levy.

2. A sensitisation/awareness campaign about the Skills Centres should be launched through the media (TV, Radio, Newspapers) and should be followed up by fund-raising activities.

3. Government policies, legislation and guidelines (in connection with the Skills Centres) should be reviewed.

4. (a) A National Workshop should be organised to look at the following in The Gambia :

   (i) Local and National Training needs

   (ii) The available facilities for training at the Skills Centres (based on the present report)

   (iii) The standardisation of training programmes (including entry requirements) for each Trade Area

   (iv) Staff development/in-service training for Skills Centres staff

   (v) The establishment of a National Examinations Board for the Skills Centres, under the WAEC umbrella

   (vi) The establishment of a Research and Quality Control Unit under the DTEVT

   (vii) The establishment of a Tracer System

   (b) The participants in this National Workshop should be representatives of the following:

   (i) Employers

   (ii) Principals of Skills/Vocational Training Centres

   (iii) The Trade Unions

   (iv) The Labour Department

   (v) The Gambian Association of Consultants/Contractors

   (vi) The DTEVT

   (vii) The DoSE

   (viii) The DoSTIE

   (ix) Other Departments of State (as appropriate).

5 (a) The DTEVT being in charge of Skills Training and representing Government, should assist in the formation of an Association of Skills Centres.

(b) If there are any problems affecting a particular Centre regarding its programme areas, a group of peers from the Centres that are represented in the Association should be seconded to such a Centre to assist the Centre by working with the staff of the Centre on the development of its programme areas.

4.2 Implementation Costs

It proved impossible to estimate the cost of implementing the above recommendations given the short time allocated for this project.

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APPENDIX I

The initial information that the DTEVT requires for the registration of Vocational Training Centres

1. The objective of the Centre/ General background

2. The target group and projected enrolment figures

3. The location of the Centre

4. A sketch plan indicating the number of classrooms/workshops and their sizes and other physical facilities to be used as part of the Centre

5. The agency responsible for the Centre and possible contact addresses, both local and overseas

6. The source of funding to ensure financial sustainability projected for a three-year period

7. A list of staff and their qualifications listed against the courses to be taught

8. The syllabuses of courses intended to be taught and any other information deemed necessary

APPENDIX II:

The targeted registered C1 Skills Centres
***by* geographical area and type of organisation**

Type of Organisation	The Centres in the Rural Areas	The Centres in the Urban Areas
Government – maintained organisation	• The *Rural Vocational Training Centre*, Mansakonko, Lower River Division • The *Julangel Skills Training Centre*, Fuladu district, Upper River Division	—
Parastatal organisation	—	• The *Kotu/NAWEC Training Centre*, Kotu, Kombo St. Mary Division
Grant-aided organisation	—	• The *Presentation Girls Vocational School*, Banjul
NGOs	• The *CanaanTechnical Institute*, Brikama, Western Division • The *Njawara Agricultural Training Centre*, North Bank Division	• The *Boka Loho Skills Training Centre*, Latrikunda, Kombo St. Mary Division • The *Sobeya Skills Training Centre*, Churchill's Town, Kombo St. Mary Division
Private organisation	• The *Brikama Training Centre*, Brikama, Western Division • The *Gambia Scouts Association's Skills Trainig Centre*, Soma, Lower River Division • The *GAM Trades Skills Centre*, Lamin, Western Division • The *Tanji Skills Centre*, Tanji, Western Division	• The *Gambia Computer Training Centre*, Banjul • The *Gambia Scouts Association's "Little Trees" Skills Training Centre*, Bakoteh, Kombo St. Mary Division • The *Lady Tuti Faal Jammeh Sewing Skills Centre*, Banjul • The *Quantum Associates Computer Training Centre*, Banjul • The *YMCA Vocational Training Centre*, Kanifing, Kombo St. Mary Division

APPENDIX III
Analysis of available physical resources (Kenneke, 1987; adapted)

APPENDIX III (a)

ANALYSIS OF THE AVAILABLE PHYSICAL RESOURCES FOR THE COMMERCIAL SUBJECT AREAS (COMPUTING)

1. GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

The geographical locations of the six centres offering Computing, such as the *Quantum Associates Computer Training Centre*, the *YMCA Vocational Training Centre*, the *Presentation Girls Vocational School* and the *Boka Loho Skills Training Centre*, were in good locations and easily accessible to both Trainers and trainees. The only Centre which was not properly located was the *Gambia Computer Training Centre* at the ECOWAS avenue in Banjul, where the Centre's one - room computer laboratory had its windows facing the main highway with heavy traffic throughout the day.

2. PHYSICAL CONDITIONS AND LAND

The physical conditions of the Centres offering Computing were also good except at the *Boka Loho Skills Training Centre* in Latrikunda Sabiji where the rooms were small.

3. NUMBER AND SIZE OF CLASS TEACHING ROOMS

Three of the six Centres offering Computing had an adequate number of classrooms that were spacious (about 70 square metres), and were used for both lectures and practical training. These were the *Presentation Girls Vocational School*, the *YMCA Vocational training Centre* and the *Canaan Technical Institute* in Brikama, although the *Canaan Technical Institute was* using the classroom only for theory lessons.

4. NUMBER AND SIZE OF COMPUTER LABORATORIES

The computer laboratories were also well arranged in four of the targeted Centres, especially in the *Quantum Associates Computer Training Centre* in Banjul where ten students had access to a computer and could print through a network of printers.

The other Centres were the *YMCA Vocational Training Centre*, the *Presentation Girls Vocational School* and the *Canaan Technical Institute* (which was not using the Laboratory for practical training due to the lack of electrcity supply).

5. NUMBER AND SIZE OF OFFICES

Offices were available for use by Computing staff members of all targeted Centres except at the *Presentation Girls Vocational School*, where the staff of the Centre used the library as a common room and office (thus denying students access to the library).

6. UTILISATION OF SPACE IN 3, 4 & 5 ABOVE

Space utilisation was very good in all the Skills Centres; more space could be provided in all the Centres to increase the enrolment of students.

7. WATER SUPPLY AND WASHING FACILITIES

Water supply was adequate in all the Centres.

8. ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

Electricity supply was very good and well organised in all the targeted Skills Centres except the *Canaan Technical Institute*. The *YMCA Vocational Training Centre* had a standby generator to supply the Computer Laboratory in case the electricity went off.

9. HEALTH AND SAFETY

The health and safety of students and staff were well organised in all the targeted centres. The Centres claimed to have Safety precautions (as part of their programmes) and these were applied strictly. Only the *Boka Loho Skills Training Centre* had some safety precaution problems due to the small size of their classrooms and computer laboratories in relation to the number of students per class. There were no air-conditioners in the classrooms.

10. ILLUMINATION LEVEL

Five of the six targeted Skills Centres offering Computing were well illuminated. The illumination level at the *Boka Loho Skills Training Centre* was low.

11. NOISE LEVEL

Noise level was low in all the targeted Skills Centres except at the *Gambia Computer Training Centre* in Banjul where the Computer laboratory had windows facing a main highway with heavy traffic throughout the day.

12. VENTILATION

Ventilation was quite good in all the targeted Centres offering Computing except at the *Gambia Computer Training Centre*. Centres such as the *Quantum Associates Computer Training Centre* in Banjul, and the *YMCA Vocational Training Centre* in Kanifing, had good windows and all the rooms were air-conditioned.

13. EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES.

There was a good supply of equipment in all the targeted Centres, especially in the *Canaan Technical Institute* which had a well equipped computer laboratory with new Pentiums and coloured printers for diagrams, although the Centre had not yet started training students in Computing (because of lack of electricity at the centre). The equipment at the *Presentation Girls Vocational School* needed to be updated; the Centre needed at least another 10 computers including the latest models, as most of the existing computers were too old. The *Quantum Associates Computer Training Centre* had the best set up with 10 new model computers in each of two laboratories and a good network system.

14. USE OF EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

All the targeted centres which were offering Computing currently were making maximum use of their equipment and supplies.

15. MAINTENANCE OF EQUIPMENT

Four of the six targeted Centres had contracted private companies to repair and maintain their equipment. Only the *Quantum Associates Computer Traning Centre* had its own maintenance workshop.

16. TYPE OF TEACHING-LEARNING (TL) MATERIALS USED

Three of the six targeted Skills Centres offering Computing used appropriate teaching/learning materials such as handouts, Flip Charts, Video/TV, White Boards and Models to aid the learning process. The Centres were the *Presentation Girls Vocational School*, the *Quantum Associates Computer Training Centre* and the *YMCA Vocational Training Centre*.

17. AMOUNT AND COST OF TL MATERIALS

The amount and cost of teaching/learning materials were high at the *Quantum Associates Computer Training Centre* where a lot of Computer Software was purchased for training purposes, but minimal at Centres such as the *Presentation Girls Vocational School* and the *YMCA Vocational Training Centre*.

18. LIBRARY FACILITIES AND THEIR USE

Only two targeted centres had lending libraries; these were the *YMCA Vocational Training Centre* and the *Presentation Girls Vocational School (PGVS)*, although, as indicated in Section 5 above, the library at the *PGVS* was also used as a common room for the teaching staff.

19. COMPUTER FACILITIES AND THEIR USE

Five of the six targeted Skills Centres had Computer facilities for use by staff. The only Centre which lacked such a facility for the staff was the *Boka Loho Skills Training Centre* in Latrikunda Sabiji, Western Division.

APPENDIX III (a) (Continued)

ANALYSIS OF THE AVAILABLE PHYSICAL RESOURCES FOR THE COMMERCIAL SUBJECT AREAS (SECRETARIAL)

1. GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

The geographical locations for all the seven targeted Skills Centres which offered Secretarial studies were quite good and suitable for the training of students; the Centres were also easily accessible (in both the rural and urban areas).

2. PHYSICAL CONDITIONS

The physical conditions of these Centres were also very good in all the Centres visited except at the *GAM-Trades Skills Training Centre* in Lamin, Western Division, and at the *Brikama Training Centre* where the buildings were derelict and needed repairs; and the classrooms needed to be improved and extended to cater for at least 20 to 25 students sitting comfortably.

3. NUMBER AND SIZE OF CLASS TEACHING ROOMS

The number of teaching classrooms for Secretarial Studies was not enough in most of the centres visited, and the classrooms were small in relation to the number of students per class. This was mostly in Centres such as the *GAM-Trades Skills Training Centre* at Lamin, the *Brikama Training Centre*, the *Boka Loho Skills Training Centre* in Latrikunda Sabiji, and the *Sobeya Skills Training Centre* in Churchill's Town, KSMD. At the *GAM-Trades Skills Training Centre* only one classroom was available for typewriting (with 36 typewriters for over 40 students); even students who had left Primary schools after Grade 6 were allowed to use the typewriters to practice typewriting.

4. NUMBER AND SIZE OF LABORATORIES.

Not applicable.

5. NUMBER AND SIZE OF OFFICES

Students were only using normal classrooms for both lectures and practicals in all the Centres.

6. UTILISATION OF SPACE IN 3, 4, & 5 ABOVE

The utilisation of space at all the Skills Centres was good and was to the maximum.

7. WATER SUPPLY AND WASHING FACILITIES

Water supply was available and adequate in all the Skills Centres except at the *Brikama Training Centre* which had only two standpipes for over 200 students on the campus.

8. ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

Electricity supply was adequate at most of the Centres visited except at the *Gambia Scouts Association's Skills Centre*, Soma and at the *GAM-Trades Skills Training Centre* where the supply was poor. The *Brikama Training Centre* and the *Canaan Technical Institute* did not have electricity supply.

9. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Health and safety requirements and facilities were non-existent in six of the seven Skills Centres visited; only the *Presentation Girls Vocational School* had good health and safety facilities and first aid for emergency treatment.

10. ILLUMINATION LEVEL

The illumination level was good in all the Skills Centres offering Secretarial studies except at the *Brikama Training Centre*.

11. NOISE LEVEL

Noise level was also very low at all the Centres except at the *Bnkama Training Centre* where there was a lot of noise coming from the vendors outside the Centre and from those who sold food inside the Centre during break periods.

12. VENTILATION

All Centres had good ventilation provided either through perforated blocks or through windows.

13. EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

Equipment such as typewriters were available for training in all the centres but some needed to be changed to modern electronic typewriters, especially at the *Bnkama Training Centre* and at the *GAM-Trades Skills Training Centre* where most of the equipment were too old.

14. USE OF EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

The use of equipment was to the maximum due to the high number of students doing Secretarial Courses. All Centres operated their equipment almost five hours per day on average.

15. MAINTENANCE OF EQUIPMENT

The maintenance of equipment was normally contracted to various maintenance and repair workshops around the local areas where the Centres were located.

16. TYPE OF TEACHING-LEARNING (TL) MATERIALS

The use of teaching and learning aids to facilitate learning was poor in quality in most Centres. Only three Centres used some extra teaching/learning materials in training their students; these were the *Presentation Girls Vocational School* in

Banjul, the *Brikama Training Centre* and the *Boka Loho Skills Training Centre* in Latrikunda, Sabiji. Each of these centres used display charts, models and handouts.

17. AMOUNT AND COST OF TEACHING LEARNING MATERIALS

The amount and cost of teaching and learning materials was minimal in three Centres, and poor in two centres; teaching-learning materials were not provided in two Centres.

18. LIBRARY FACILITIES AND THEIR USE

Library facilities existed at the *Presentation Girls Vocational School*, although the library was also used as a common room for staff. Students could only borrow books and read in their class rooms or at home. The library facilities at the *Sobeya Skills Training Centre* in Churchill's Town and at the *Gambia Scouts Association's Centre (the Little Trees Centre)* at Bakoteh, were poor in both quantity and quality and needed to be upgraded. The other Centres had no library facilities.

19. COMPUTER FACILITIES AND THEIR USE

Computer facilities were not provided either for staff or for students on the secretarial courses.

APPENDIX III (b)

ANALYSIS OF THE AVAILABLE PHYSICAL RESOURCES FOR THE HOME ECONOMICS SUBJECT AREAS (FOOD AND FASHION)

1. GEOGRAPHICAL LOCATION

The geographical locations for all the targeted Skills Centres (n=8) offering Home Economics were good except for the location of the *Lady Tuti Faal-Jammeh Skills Sewing Centre* in Banjul. The location of this Centre was not ideal for training purposes since it is situated on a major highway where heavy traffic disturbed the students' concentration.

2. PHYSICAL CONDITIONS AND LAND

Six of the targeted Skills Centres for Home Economics had good physical facilities. The buildings for the other two were in poor conditions. These were the *Lady Tuti Faal-Jammeh Skills Sewing Centre* in Banjul and the *Rural Vocational Training Centre* in Mansakonko, Lower River Division.

3. NUMBER AND SIZE OF CLASS TEACHING ROOMS

Four of the eight targeted Skills Centres offering Home Economics had good classrooms for the teaching of Cookery and of Sewing subjects, although some of these classrooms were used for both theory and practical training. Centres such as the *Presentation Girls Vocational School* in Banjul and the *Boka Loho Skills Training Centre* in Latrikunda, Sabiji had a good set up (although the classrooms at the *Boka Loho Skills Training Centre* were smaller in size). The class teaching rooms at the *Lady Tuti Faal-Jammeh Skills Sewing Centre*, the *Brikama Training Centre*, the *Gambia Scouts Association's Skills Training Centre*, at Soma, and the *Rural Vocational Training Centre* in Mansakonko needed repairs and maintenance.

4. NUMBER AND SIZE OF WORKSHOPS

The workshops for Home Economics subjects in all the Centres were the same as the class teaching rooms, as these were used for both theory and practical lessons.

5. NUMBER AND SIZE OF OFFICES

Five of the eight targeted Skills Centres that offered Home Economics had office facilities for the teaching staff. The staff in the other three Centres used their classrooms or workshops to prepare their lessons.

6. UTILISATION OF SPACE IN 3, 4 & 5 ABOVE

Three of the targeted Skills Centres had not been able to make good use of their classrooms and workshop facilities due to their poor physical conditions. These were the *Lady Tuti Faal-Jammeh Skills Sewing Centre* in Banjul, the *Julangel Skills Training Centre* in Upper River Division and the *Brikama Training Centre*. The remaining Centres used their space facilities for an average of twenty four hours, per week.

7. WATER SUPPLY AND WASHING FACILITIES

Five of the eight targeted Skills Centres had adequate water supply throughout (although not all of them had washing facilities); these were the *Julangel Skills Centre*, the *Boka Loho Skills Training Centre* in Latrikunda Sabiji, the *Sobeya Skills Training Centre* at Churchill's Town, the *Presentation Girls Skills School* in Banjul and the *Rural Vocational Training Centre* in Mansakonko.

8. ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

Only three of the eight Skills Centres were without electricity supply. These were the *Julangel Skills Centre*, the *Brikama Training Centre* and the *Gambia Scouts Association's Skills Centre (the Little Trees)* at Bakoteh.

9. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Five of the targeted Skills Centres had good health and safety facilities with first aid for emergency treatment. Two other Centres, the *Lady Tuti Faal-Jammeh Skills Sewing Centre* and the *Rural Vocational Training Centre* had poor health and safety

facilities. The only Centre where health and safety facilities were not provided was the *Julangel Skills Centre*.

10. ILLUMINATION LEVEL

The illumination level in three centres was poor due to the lack of electricity supply. These were the Centres indicated in section eight above.

11. NOISE LEVEL

The targeted Skills Centres had low noise level except the *Lady Tuti Faal-Jammeh Skills Sewing Centre* in Banjul due to its location on a main highway with heavy traffic.

12 VENTILATION

Two of the eight Skills Centres did not have proper ventilation. These were the *Lady Tuti Faal-Jammeh Skills Sewing Centre* in Banjul and the *Sobeya Skills Training Centre* in Churchill's Town.

13. EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

Four of the eight Skills Centres visited had equipment for Cookery but all the Centres needed new sewing machines to train students in Fashion. The Centres that were better equipped for Cookery were the *Presentation Girls Vocational School* in Banjul and the *Rural Vocational Training Centre* in Mansakonko. Materials and supplies were inadequate in all the targeted Skills Centres.

14. USE OF EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

All Centres were making good use of their equipment and supplies, although these were not enough and needed to be upgraded.

15. MAINTENANCE OF EQUIPMENT

All the targeted Centres had contracted private agencies for the repair of their equipment.

16. TYPE OF TEACHING - LEARNING (TL) MATERIALS

Six of the eight targeted Skills Centres had developed and used appropriate teaching and learning materials, such as samples of different sewing materials and of different foods, handouts, teaching charts and models.

17. AMOUNT AND COST OF TEACHING/LEARNING MATERIALS.

All these six Skills Centres in Section 16 above had invested a small amount of money on teaching and learning materials. In the case of Fashion, a lot of cheap cloth material was available at a very low cost from the market.

18. LIBRARY FACILITIES AND THEIR USE.

Library facilities existed only at one targeted Skills Centre. This was the *Presentation Girls Vocational School*, although the library was also used as a common room for staff.

19. COMPUTER FACILITIES AND THEIR USE.

Computer facilities were not provided either for staff or for students in all the targeted Skills Centres.

APPENDIX III (c)

ANALYSIS OF THE AVAILABLE PHYSICAL RESOURCES FOR THE TECHNICAL SUBJECT AREAS (ENGINEERING AND CONSTRUCTION)

1. GEOGRAPHICAL CONDITIONS

In general, the geographical locations of the Centres were good for access to them but comments such as "music around the locality is too loud," and Centres "are far away from where materials could be bought" were made. Locations were decided on by local village committees.

2. PHYSICAL CONDITIONS AND LAND

Some of the buildings were in very poor conditions. The Blacksmith workshop at the *Rural Vocational Training Centre* in Mansakonko was still a shed and needed to be properly built for security and for the safe storage of materials and equipment.

3. NUMBER AND SIZES OF THE CLASS TEACHING ROOMS

In general, each subject area had a class teaching room for theory lessons. Some of the rooms were not in use because the trainees were not literate. The classroom sizes varied in length and width. Some were 5m x 5m, others were 6m x 7m. Classrooms were spacious and well furnished in some places but poorly furnished in others.

4. NUMBER AND SIZES OF WORKSHOPS

Workshops (for practical work) were available in all the visited Centres Their sizes varied from 5m x 5m to 8m x 7m. Some workshops were poorly furnished (such as those at the *Julangel Skills Training Centre* at Fuladu in the Upper River Division and those at the *Rural Vocational Training Centre* at Mansakonko).

The workbenches were quite inadequate. In a workshop where there were about 15 to 20 trainees, only about two or three workbenches were available and only three or four vices were mounted on these workbenches. This made training very difficult.

5. NUMBER AND SIZES OF OFFICES

In most centres, offices were not provided for the Programme Leaders, but there were a few Centres where offices were attached to the workshops. Some of the Programme Leaders converted their stores (for materials) into offices or at least used a corner in the stores as an office.

6. UTILISATION OF SPACE IN 3, 4, & 5 ABOVE

The utilisation of space was on average well distributed. Classrooms were being utilised for between 10 to 12 hours, per week and workshops between 14 to 16 hours/week on average. In Centres where trainees were not literate, the utilisation of space was almost nil, except for workshop use. Some Programme Leaders used those classrooms as offices where there was no provision for an office.

7. WATER SUPPLY AND WASHING FACILITIES

Water supply was available in all the visited Centres but there were certain Centres without washing facilities (toilets and washrooms). Some had washing facilities but these were not adequate for the population of students in the Centres. There were nowhere any special toilet facilities for female trainees. In such instances, female trainees washed themselves in their different homes. The *Julangel Skills Training Centre* has a "borehole" but washing facilities were not available; however, arrangements were being made to bring the water supply to the workshops at the Centre. Special washrooms were also being built to facilitate washing after work.

8. ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

This was a big problem in the provinces.

9. HEALTH AND SAFETY

Health and safety were part of the programmes in most training centres for emergencies and accident prevention. In most of the centres courses on safety and FIRST AID treatment were carried out by the Red Cross Society. This was encouraging considering the number of accidents that can occur in the workshops especially among beginners.

10. ILLUMINATION LEVEL

In general the illumination level was good except in a few places like at the *Brikama Training Centre*.

11 NOISE LEVEL

The noise level in most Centres was low except at the *Lady Tuti Faal - Jammeh Sewing Skills Centre* where heavy traffic disturbed training all the time. Music was a distracting problem at the *Brikama Training Centre* as the Centre was built around the market area and music was on all the time in that area.

12. VENTILATION

Proper ventilation is one of the requirements for any workshop. Though some workshops were well ventilated, others were poorly ventilated. Space and an appropriate number of windows were necessary in the workshops visited.

13. EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

Tools and equipment were available in the Centres but where there was a lack of electricity, they could not be used. The supply of materials was hardly enough but the instructors made good use of what was available.
Most of the equipment at the *Rural Vocational Training Centre* were broken down and maintenance was a problem. Only basic hand tools were in use. This limited any in-depth training.

14 USE OF EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

As indicated above in Section 13, supplies were most inadequate, also, tools were not sufficient for proper training in some Centres. However, the *Kotu (NAWEC) Training Centre* was geared towards in-house training and had everything necessary for proper training.
Most of the electrical equipment in the Centres was not in use, especially in the rural areas, because of the general lack of electrical power.
In some centres such as the *Kotu(NAWEC) Training Centre* and the *Gambia Scouts Association's Little Trees Skills Centre*, at Bakoteh, equipment and supplies were used to the maximum.

15. MAINTENANCE OF EQUIPMENT

Maintenance was lacking in most Centres because of the lack of qualified personnel in place and because of funds. In some Centres like the *Kotu(NAWEC) Training Centre*, a maintenance unit was well established to take care of equipment and tools.

16. TYPE OF TEACHING-LEARNING MATERIALS USED

One of the biggest problems the Skills Centres were facing, was the general lack of teaching-aids (apart from chalk-boards). Models were available in certain Centres in subjects like Automotive Engineering and Electrical Engineering. Engine blocks were dismantled and used by trainees as models. What aggravated the problem was the general lack of trained instructors to design and produce their own teaching-learning materials

17 AMOUNT AND COST OF TEACHING-LEARNING MATERIALS

The cost of teaching-learning materials was generally not known to instructors because they did not do any purchasing. Teaching-learning materials were always in the form of gifts to the Centres. The donors normally bought and handed them in as gifts.

18 LIBRARY FACILITIES AND THEIR USE

The library facilities in the visited Centres were very poor.The *Canaan Technical Institute*, and the *Kotu(NAWEC) Training Centre* had proper library facilities. Donor agencies, the British High Commission, and the Embassies of other countries had donated books to Centres. Some of these books were outdated but the trainees made good use of them where possible.

19. COMPUTER FACILITIES AND THEIR USE

Just a few Centres were privileged to have computers for the Programme Leaders and, wherever possible, these Programme Leaders used computers for the preparation of their hand-outs for teaching.